

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA, KS, KN

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FORMER PRIMIN KISHI

SUMMARY: DURING VISIT SEOUL OF JAPANESE MEMBERS OF KOREAN/JAPAN ECONOMIC COUNCIL, FORMER PRIMIN KISHI, ACCOMPANIED BY LDP DIET MEMBER TATSUO TANAKA, MET PRIVATELY WITH AMBASAADOR AND DCM FOR GENERAL DISCUSSION OF ROK/JAPANESE RELATIONS. KISHI HAD PREVIOUSLY MET WITH PRESIDENT PARK AND PRIMIN KIM CHONG-PIL. KISHI REMAINS CONVINCED OF ESSENTIALITY STRONG KOREA, CLOSE ROK/JAPANESE RELATIONS, AND U.S. MILITARY ROLE IN KOREA. HE CONCERNED BY UNDERLYING DIFFICULTIES IN ROK/JAPANESE RELATIONSHIP AND PARTICULARLY BY POTENTIAL CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE IN KOREA DUE TO GROWING ECONOMIC PRESSURES. WHILE RECOGNIZING DANGERS OF CHOSEN SOREN ACTIVITIES CITED BY PRESIDENT PARK, HE SEES LITTLE HOPE OF EFFECTIVE GOJ CONTROLS UNTIL JAPAN REALIZES CHOSEN SOREN THREAT TO JAPANESE SECURITY. END SUMMARY

1. KISHI DESCRIBED HIS TALKS WITH PRESIDENT PARK AND PRIME MINISTER AS FRIENDLY AND USEFUL, WITH ALL AGREEING ON NEED FOR CLOSE ROK/JAPANESE RELATIONSHIP. PRESIDENT PARK PUT PARTICULAR EMPHASIS UPON HIS CONCERNS REGARDING

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ACTIVITIES OF CHOSEN SOREN AND NORTH KOREANS IN JAPAN.

2. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, KISHI REAFFIRMED HIS LONG-HELD VIEW THAT "STRONG, SELF-CONFIDENT KOREA" IS IN JAPAN'S INTEREST AND CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH KOREA IS "ESSENTIAL FOR JAPAN." HE AGREED WITH AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT THAT KOREANS SUFFER FROM INSECURITY IN DEALING WITH JAPAN AND BROADER INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT. AS RESULT JAPAN MUST EXERCISE PARTICULAR FORBEARANCE IN RELATIONS WITH KOREA, RATHER THAN INSISTING UPON QUID PRO QUO SUCH AS RELEASE OF KIM TAE CHUNG IN EXCHANGE FOR MINISTERIAL MEETING.

3. KISHI AND TANAKA URGED CONTINUED STRONG U.S. MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN KOREA, INCLUDING SUPPORTING DEFENSE PRODUCTION AS MEANS OF BOLSTERING KOREAN SELF-CONFIDENCE. THEY PARTICULARLY STRESSED SATISFACTION WITH FORTHCOMING VISIT OF PRESIDENT FORD TO KOREA AS ANOTHER STEP IN BOLSTERING KOREAN SELF-ASSURANCE.

4. WITH RESPECT CHOSEN SOREN, KISHI SAW LITTLE HOPE OF IMMEDIATE MEASURES TO CONTROL NORTH KOREAN ACTIVITY IN JAPAN GIVEN STRONG BIAS OF JAPANESE PRESS WHICH EXPLOITED BY OPPOSITION AS WELL AS SOME ELEMENTS IN LDP. UNTIL JAPANESE REALIZE THAT CHOSEN SOREN REPRESENTS THREAT TO JAPAN'S OWN SECURITY, KISHI WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT POSITIVE CONTROLS.

5. KISHI PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT COMING MONTHS IN KOREA, ANTICIPATING CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE DUE TO GROWING ECONOMIC PRESSURES. GIVEN CURRENT MOOD IN JAPAN, HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC THAT GOJ COULD COME UP WITH GRANT AID PROGRAM AS FOLLOW-ON TO JAPANESE PAYMENTS UNDER NORMALIZATION AGREEMENT, WHICH WILL END NEXT YEAR. BUT HE RECOGNIZED BOTH JAPAN AND U.S. MUST DO SOMETHING TO ALLEVIATE ECONOMIC PRESSURES; HE AND TANAKA SUGGESTED CHANNELING OF INVESTMENT FROM BOTH COUNTRIES IN JOINT VENTURES.

6. TANAKA ALSO MENTIONED CONCERNS ABOUT CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR LOS ANGELES EARLY NEXT YEAR TO BE
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ATTENDED BY UTSUNOMIYA, DEN AND PROFESSORS REISCHAUER AND COHEN, WHICH APT TO STIR UP FURTHER ANTI-ROK SENTIMENT IN U.S. AND JAPAN. TANAKA SAID THAT POLICE HAD REPORT THIS CONFERENCE, AT LEAST IN PART, FINANCED BY CHOSEN SOREN WHICH HAS LOTS OF MONEY TO SPEND.

7. IN REMINISCING ABOUT 1960 EVENTS WITH AMBASSADOR,

KISHI COMMENTED THAT PRESIDENT FORD'S VISIT UNLIKELY TO AROUSE SAME OPPOSITION AS PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S ABORTIVE VISIT IN 1960, ALTHOUGH THERE WILL BE SOME DEMONSTRATIONS. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THIS TIME PRESS IS SUPPORTING VISIT, RECOGNIZING THAT ANOTHER CANCELLATION WOULD HAVE VERY ADVERSE EFFECTS ON JAPAN'S INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION. HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT TANAKA'S PRESENT POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT VISIT. AS OUTRIGHT SUPPORTER OF FUKUDA, HE EXPRESSED HOPEFULNESS THAT THERE WOULD BE CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT LATE THIS YEAR.

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